

# Exhibit 16



<https://www.ourmidland.com/news/article/City-preps-for-uptick-of-absentee-voter-14852806.php>

## City preps for uptick of absentee voter ballots

### Council authorizes purchase of ballot machine

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Looking ahead, the City of Midland is preparing for the next election by making sure it has the equipment to process residents' ballots in a timely and efficient manner.

Specifically, city staff are expecting an uptick in absentee voter ballots, so Midland City Council approved the purchase of a new high-speed ballot tabulator at its regular meeting this week.

In the election of 2018, Proposal 3 passed in the State of Michigan, allowing same-day voter registration and no-reason absentee ballots, among other things. Previously, voters under 60 had to choose from a list of six reasons to receive an absentee ballot, which allows people to cast their vote from home, before election day. Now, every voter can choose an absentee ballot.

Romney Says It's Likely More Republicans Want to Hear From Bolton



Since Prop 3 passed, several municipalities across the state have seen an uptick in voters who chose absentee.

Midland's City Clerk Erica Armstrong said the City of Midland could potentially receive nearly 33,000 absentee ballots and has already seen a much higher volume of absentee ballots and voter turnouts in 2018, compared to previous midterm elections.

"If we receive the (number of) ballots that we're expecting, it would not be possible for us to finish (processing them) in the amount of time given," Armstrong said.

Proposal 3 did nothing about the expanse of time allowed to process absentee ballots, which is confined to a single day. The ballots are counted on election day and cannot be opened before 7 a.m. the morning of.

Often, this can mean ballot inspectors have to work long days, well over 15 hours in some cases.

"Many jurisdictions in the last election, in August, reported working until 2:30 in the morning — that's a very long day for many of my inspectors who are over the age of 60 or even 70," Armstrong said. "And, they're also only being paid minimum wage for the one day so, we can't really expect that of them. So, anything that we can do to provide the results sooner, and stay accurate as well, is what I'm trying to achieve."

So, she's been doing research on the topic to see what the city could do to prepare for the next presidential election in 2020. Her recommendation to council was to purchase a new \$58,000 high-speed tabulator that could process 130 ballots per minute and allow for digital review of each ballot.

With that, the city would recruit and pay \$1,700 for a team of 12 inspectors to carry out the work.

In addition, Armstrong said the new tabulator machine, which would be housed at City Hall, would eliminate the need for ballot inspectors to drive their own personal vehicles to deliver the ballots to the 24 precincts in 14 polling locations, cutting down on human error and reducing the amount of time it would take.

Councilwoman Diane Brown Wilhelm said she thought the purchase made sense and could be justified. Councilman Steve Arnosky agreed.

"Our old way of doing it is really not going to hold up as time goes on here, so we almost don't have a choice," he said.

The council unanimously approved the purchase of the ballot tabulator/adjudication machine.

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